MESSNER REEVES LLP



Charles C. Cavanagh

Partner

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Practice Areas

- Litigation
- Labor & Employment

Admissions

- Colorado
- California

Education & Honors

- University of Michigan School of Law, J.D., cum laude, 1998
- Georgetown University, B.S.F.S., cum laude, 1994

Associations

- American Bar Association
- Colorado Bar Association
- Los Angeles County Bar Association
- Larimer County Bar Association

Professional Experience

- Arnold & Porter, LLP, Los Angeles, CA
- Irell & Manella LLP, Los Angeles, CA

Charles Cavanagh is a trial lawyer and a member of the firm's Litigation and Labor & Employment Practice Groups. Mr. Cavanagh has extensive experience litigating in both federal and state trial and appellate courts, as well as resolving disputes through binding arbitration. While Mr. Cavanagh's practice focuses on defending clients against labor and employment claims, he has handled matters involving several different areas of the law, including false advertising allegations, construction defect claims, intellectual property protection, and commercial contract disputes. Mr. Cavanagh prides himself on being able to guide his clients effectively throughout the litigation process, including taking matters to trial and through appeals when appropriate. Mr. Cavanagh also has experience counseling clients with respect to labor and employment matters, including formulation of employee handbooks, conducting workplace investigations, termination procedures, and litigation avoidance strategies.

Mr. Cavanagh is admitted to both the Colorado and California bars. After a decade of practicing law in California, he moved to Colorado and joined Messner Reeves, where he often assists with the California needs of the firm's clients, while continuing to develop his own trial and appellate practices. Mr. Cavanagh has significant courtroom experience, including first-chair trial experience, in both states.

When he is not in the office, Mr. Cavanagh likes to enjoy the Colorado outdoors with his wife and son through hiking, cycling, and skiing. Mr. Cavanagh and his family also love to experience other cultures through travel.

Noteworthy

- Oversaw the defense of dozens of individual wage-and-hour arbitrations brought against a large restaurant chain throughout the Western United States and obtained a complete defense verdict in each of the arbitrations that he tried to completion.
- Obtained a complete defense verdict on behalf of a large restaurant chain after a federal court jury trial in an action filed by a former employee, alleging pregnancy discrimination, failure to accommodate a disability, and failure to engage in the interactive process.

- Obtained a complete defense verdict on behalf of a large restaurant chain after a federal court jury trial in an age discrimination action brought by a job applicant.
- Obtained a complete defense verdict on behalf of a large restaurant chain after a state court jury trial in an action filed by a former employee, alleging harassment and discrimination on the basis of gender, race, and disability, as well as whistleblower retaliation.
- Obtained a complete defense verdict on behalf of a large restaurant chain after a federal court jury trial in a sexual orientation harassment action filed by a former employee.
- Obtained a complete defense verdict on behalf of a large restaurant chain after a federal court jury trial in a disability discrimination lawsuit filed by a former employee.
- Obtained summary judgment, and defeated certification of a putative statewide class of consumers, on behalf of a large restaurant chain in a false advertising action regarding the "non-GMO" character of its meat and dairy products. Obtained subsequent affirmance of these rulings from the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals.
- Defeated certification of a putative nationwide class of consumers and obtained a defense judgment on behalf of a large restaurant chain in a false advertising action regarding the "naturally raised" character of its meat.
- Obtained a complete defense verdict on behalf of a large motion picture production company after binding arbitration in a claim for underpayment brought by a writers guild under a collective bargaining agreement.
- Obtained a net defense verdict on behalf of a large e-commerce company after binding arbitration in connection with contractual claims and cross-claims between the company and its fulfillment services provider.
- Obtained dismissal of two putative false advertising class actions on behalf of a large restaurant chain regarding the "non-GMO" character of its meat, dairy and soda products.
- Obtained dismissal of a putative false advertising class action on behalf of a large restaurant chain regarding the "non-GMO" character of its corn products.
- Obtained dismissals of two putative false advertising class actions on behalf of a large restaurant chain regarding the use of bacon in the preparation of its pinto beans.
- Defeated certification of a putative consumer class against a large residential alarm monitoring company with respect to claims regarding the legality and enforceability of numerous provisions of company's form contract, and successfully defended that ruling before the California Court of Appeal.
- Obtained summary judgement on behalf of a large restaurant chain with respect to national origin harassment and discrimination claims brought against it by two former employees.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of a large restaurant chain with respect to discrimination, failure-to-accommodate, wrongful termination and wage-and-hour claims brought against it by a former employee.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of a school district with respect to sexual harassment claims brought against it by a former employee.
- Obtained summary judgment on behalf of a high-net-worth individual with respect to an enforcement-of-foreign-judgment action brought against him in California state court.
- Successfully defended before the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals a district court's grant of summary judgment in favor of a manufacturing company with respect to race discrimination claims brought against it by a former employee.
- Persuaded the California Court of Appeal to reverse an order denying a motion to strike certain cross-claims under that state's anti-SLAPP statute.
- Defeated an e-commerce company's motion for a preliminary injunction against a large software developer in a trademark infringement action in federal court.
- Persuaded the Los Angeles County Department of Environmental Health at an administrative hearing to drop all claims against a large restaurant chain regarding alleged misrepresentations with respect to various menu items.